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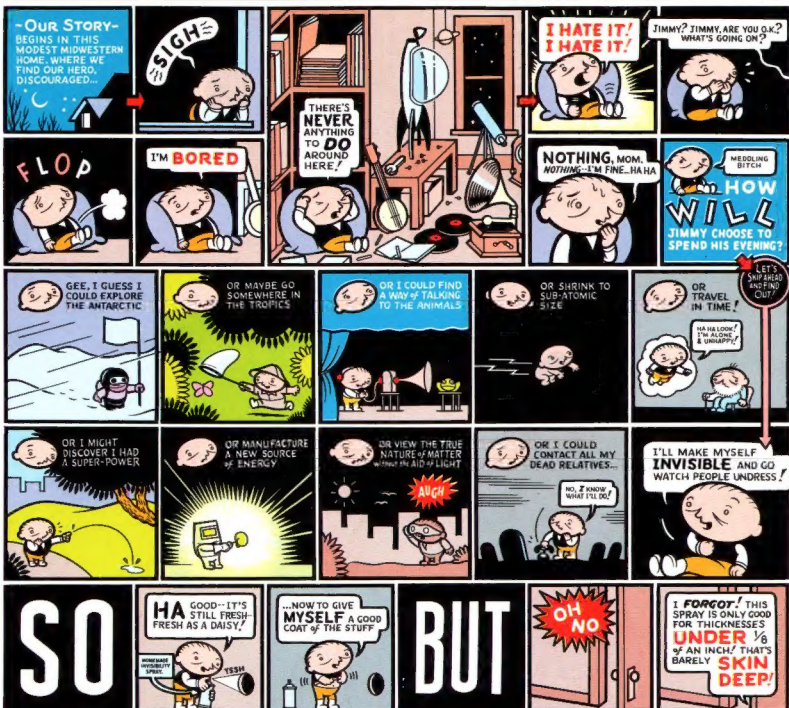
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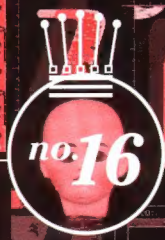
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ZERO



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ZERO

THE BLOOD-CLOT BOY

AL COLUMBIA 1996

Long ago, there lived an old Count blessed with a faithful Countess and two beautiful daughters. Their family name was *Borofsky*, and they were filthy stinking rich.



Things went smashingly. The idea of having a living relation as far off as *Zoog*, much less a visitor at all, was very exciting to the old Count, and he remained in high spirits throughout the whole meal, entertaining his guest by cracking jokes, spilling his wine, and speaking incoherently in a language he didn't even know.



Much to the old Count's relief, the stranger accepted the proposal enthusiastically, and though the wedding was a small one, everyone drank heavily, danced, and generally had a very enjoyable time. Alongside his daughters, the old Count gave his new son-in-law the family mansion and his entire fortune to boot; such was his happiness after seven glasses of corn beer that no one, not even you or I, could have stopped him. He and the Countess kept for themselves only a little cottage on the edge of the property, where they hoped to settle into their old age free of worldly concern, to devote themselves, as it were, to silent contemplation, and the serenity of mind that only provincial living can afford.

Very rich, but very lonely, as they had no living relations to speak of (The Borofskys being the sole survivors of a once vast and prestigious breed of Vorianian shoe-cobblers, dismissed forever in the wake of the great dragon wars of '47) and still fewer friends, having ceased entertaining the cream of Brassafax society after the birth of their daughters, Ruthie and Lucy, some thirteen years ago. Therefore, all the more poignant and exciting for them, when, after so many years of solitude, they were suddenly visited by an odd little man dressed in peasant clothing, claiming to be a long-sundered relative from Zoog (a tiny, one could almost say *non-existent* province set on the northern coast of the river Gimby-gim). Though the stranger's physiognomy betrayed absolutely no indication of a classic-born Borofsky, the old Count was willing to overlook this; the visitor exuded such sincerity and smiled so good-naturedly that, relation or not, he couldn't help but invite the young man to take advantage of his hospitality, and, without hesitating, begged him to stay for dinner.

Now, it should be stated clearly that the old Count had always wanted a son; though he loved his daughters very much, he had considerable difficulties in marrying them off, and worried constantly about having a proper heir for his enormous wealth. That evening, in a brief moment of profound lucidity, he struck upon a way to fix this problem that had been nagging a hole in his head for as long as he could remember...

AH! I WILL LET THIS NICE YOUNG MAN STAY HERE AND LIVE WITH US AND I WILL GIVE HIM MY DAUGHTERS TO MARRY AND WE WILL ALL BE VERY HAPPY TOGETHER



At first, the son-in-law was very good to the old couple and often invited them to their old mansion for dinner, which, under new house rule, had become quite an extravagant affair. The old Count was so impressed with the array of exotic food set before him that, on some evenings, he wondered how this young man could afford it all. Then he would recall, in some detail, the events leading up to his present state of affairs, but then instantly forget again, happy to be in the presence of his benefactor, without whom he'd have nothing, and so on...



Things went on like this for a while and, as the story goes, by and by, the son-in-law began to neglect the Count and Countess. Dinner at the mansion became less than frequent, and then stopped altogether; their weekly allowance of food also diminished, and the last basket that the son-in-law sent over was filled with bad fish, rotten meat, and moldy fruit. The daughters adopted their husband's evil attitude and often helped him play cruel tricks on the old couple. They also used foul language when addressing them and, generally speaking, behaved as one characterized by intense ill-will, malevolence, and spite.

One day, the Old Man went out to Cut-Bank Creek and, while foraging for mushrooms (all of which he found were poisonous), he spotted his son-in-law sneaking hurriedly through a nearby field en route to the Sacajawea Forest, a wood famous in those days for having mysterious and transfigurative properties.



That is to say, the twins forcefully and irrevocably broke their parents' heart, and at a time when they were needed by them the most.



Curious, the Count decided to follow him, and after a while, they came to a clearing where the son-in-law had a little workshop set up. The Count could see many things sharp and deadly in this place, such as knives, cleavers, a scimitar, an axe, and some hooks to hang meat from.



Safely hidden, the Count watched as the son-in-law pulled a yak from his sack and plopped it onto his workbench. (A yak, as everyone knows, is a very rare and sacred animal, a *holy* animal, and only two were known to exist during the time of our story. They say that a yak holds many secrets in its blood and intestines, but that only the abbots of Cromwell know how to read them properly.) The Count, who was spying on his homicidal son-in-law and therefore should have been frightened, on the contrary, felt deliciously happy with the thrill of intrigue and suspense that hung around him. The son-in-law, for his part, began to torture the yak by removing its skin very slowly, inch by inch (so as not to miss any "secrets"), until all the countryside was filled with the animal's high-pitched screaming. *"The more you suffer, the better you'll taste!"* hollered the son-in-law, *"The less I spill, the less I waste!"* Finally, after an hour of this nauseating activity (an activity which nevertheless kept the old Count ecstatically riveted), the poor yak screwed up its eyes and died with a feeble hiss. Then the son-in-law carefully cut it into little pieces and put the pieces in his sack and left the workshop.

The Count waited to be sure he was gone, and then examined the abattoir closely for scraps.

All that remained of the murdered yak was a large clot of blood, which the old Count immediately mistook for a liver. He quickly snatched it up and hurried away.



They filled a pot with water anyway, threw the clot of blood in, and waited for it to boil. When the water began to boil, there immediately came from the pot a noise as of a child crying, as if it were being hurt, burnt, or scalded.



It jiggled in his pocket the whole way home.



They looked in the kettle and saw there a little boy...



"Quick, woman! Put the kettle on to boil! I've brought something back from a BUTCHERING!"

"Oh! Out hunting? Well, I daresay it's about time you got us something good to eat! What is it? Is it a squirrel? Oh! What is it? Don't keep me waiting! Is it a rabbit?"

"No... I couldn't say... well, here! Take a look! It's actually just a huge clot of blood! Ha Ha!"

They were very surprised.



They quickly took it out of the water and the Countess wrapped it in a warm blanket. The child fell asleep right away, but the old couple stayed up long into the night talking things over. They knew that if the son-in-law found out about the little boy, he would kill it, so they resolved to say nothing and hope for the best. They put the sleeping child in their bed and curled up on the hard floor beside him.

The next morning, however, they woke to find the child had grown to the size of a healthy, eight-year old boy...

GOOD MORNING!

SORRY TO WAKE YOU, BUT I WAS A BIT HUNGRY, AND COULDN'T FIND ANY FOOD ... HOW COME YOU HAVE NO FOOD TO EAT?

The old couple broke down and told the Blood-clot boy of their plight. When Blood-clot heard what the wicked son-in-law had done to them, he became very angry. He did not run off half-cocked to take revenge (as most of us would have), but instead spent a little time with the shaken couple to calm their nerves, as well as to collect his own thoughts, so that he could proceed methodically, simply, and honestly when the time came for him to settle their account.

He waited till nightfall to do this. After the old couple had gone to sleep, he walked over to the mansion and pecked in the windows. He could see some figures moving inside, so he went ahead and knocked on the door. Expecting the son-in-law to be a monstrous giant, he couldn't help but laugh when the door opened and there stood before him a little pucker in boxer-shorts, obviously afraid of Blood-clot boy. Without exchanging pleasantries, the Blood-clot boy pushed him back into the house, rolled up his sleeves, and set to work.

Now, after he killed the son-in-law and the hideous daughters, he cut them into little pieces and set the pieces on fire. Then he went about the house and cleaned up the mess they had made. He polished all the fancy bas-reliefs and dusted off the furniture, he removed all the red lightbulbs and replaced them with soft yellow ones, he put fresh sheets on all the beds, and fluffed all the pillows. Once everything was in order, he went back to the cottage to tell the old couple the good news.

GO NOW, GOOD PEOPLE ... GO AND LIVE IN YOUR PARADISE. YOU'LL FIND THAT ALL THE EVIL IS GONE, SO YOU CAN BE HAPPY AGAIN!

AS FOR MYSELF, I THINK I'D LIKE TO WANDER A BIT. DO YOU KNOW WHERE THERE ARE ANY PEOPLE? I'D LIKE TO SEE SOME PEOPLE!

"Well," sighed the Old Count, sad to see the boy go so soon. "Down where the Moon-river and Killed Creek come together there is a little town. You might find some people there."

Blood-clot assured the Count and Countess that he would be back before they knew it, and then set off for the village.

After two days of tireless skipping, he found the town, but saw no people. In the center of the village there sat a big, brick house sporting a peccant, yet strangely attractive banner...

He instinctively avoided this house and went instead to one nearby, where an old lady lived.

They went inside and the old lady timidly gave him a plate of bad food.

HELLO! I'VE COME A LONG WAY, AND I'M VERY HUNGRY! DO YOU HAVE ANY FOOD FOR A WEARY TRAVELER?



WHAT ABOUT THOSE BARRELS FULL OF APPLES OUTSIDE? NOW COME, YOU WON'T GIVE ME SOME OF THAT TO EAT?

"Hush! You will be heard!" said she, and then brought her voice down to a whisper, "That food belongs to the Brownshirts, and they are the lords of this town. They force us to do all the hard work, while they take all the spoil. They will be outside when the sun goes down to collect the barrels — you must leave right away! They will kill you!"

Incensed that a town could have fallen so low as to allow its Grandmothers to be treated so abominably, Blood-clot boy decided that *someone* had to stand up to these brownshirt bullies, and it might as well be him.



Later, when one came out to take the barrels, Blood-clot boy popped up and whacked him repeatedly with a heavy pipe...



The brownshirt ran shrieking back into the building and told the others what happened. Soon, the whole pack came loping outside and slowly approached the Blood-clot boy, who merely chuckled...



A scene of incredibly beautiful, enchanting violence followed, wherein our hero, the Blood-clot boy, taking full advantage of his mysterious origin and power, laid waste to the ghouls in a very exciting and interesting way, and in doing so, enjoyed himself quite a bit. Yes, he enjoyed himself thoroughly, and in every respect.

He killed all but one, remembering that it, too, was a creature of God, and that if he destroyed it, there would be no more brownshirts left in the world. Instead, the Blood-clot boy had him hug-tied and strung up in the public square, to serve as an object for public scorn, humiliation, and ridicule...



WELL, I'M OFF! DO YOU KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND MORE PEOPLE? I'D LIKE TO SEE THEM!



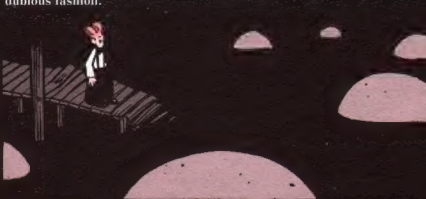
WELL, THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE ACROSS THE SUN-RIVER, BUT YOU HAVE TO WALK OVER A DANGEROUS BRIDGE TO GET THERE. THE WINDSUCKER LIVES IN THE WATER BELOW. HE WILL KILL YOU.



Blood-clot was delighted to know that such a creature existed and set off at once. He found the bridge to be quite rickety indeed, and to his immense satisfaction, dangerous as hell.



After miles of twists and turns, loop-de-loops, and just plain good fun, the bridge suddenly and very solemnly dipped into the black water, only to be replaced by a mass of smooth, rounded stones that arranged and spread themselves across the river in a dazzlingly symmetrical and dubious fashion.



"Ha! I guess I'll just have to hop across these stones that are arranged in such a way as to distort my senses, so that I might injure or possibly kill myself along the way!"

He made good progress, but the Sun-river was very large and he hopped for the better part of a day. When the coast-line was finally in sight, Blood-clot became very excited, tired as he was from the monotony of bouncing from rock to rock. But just at the last minute, when his concentration was at its lowest ebb, one of the rocks rose out of the water in the shape of a head, and opened its terrible mouth, and swallowed the Blood-clot boy whole. The Windsucker had tricked him.



Once inside the Windsucker's belly, Blood-clot saw a fearful sight. The ground was white as snow with the bones of those who had died. There were bodies with flesh on them; some were just dead, and some still living. Those who were still alive looked very unhappy.



He quickly made some rattles out of bones and hooves, bound his knife to the top of his head so that the point stuck upward, and addressed the unfortunate people.

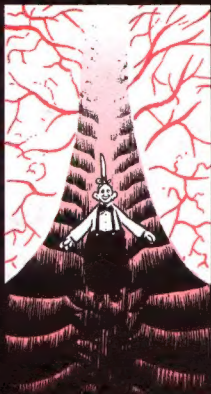
"You who still draw a little breath, try to shake your heads (in time to the song), and those who are still able to move, stand up and take courage! We are going to have the GHOST DANCE!"



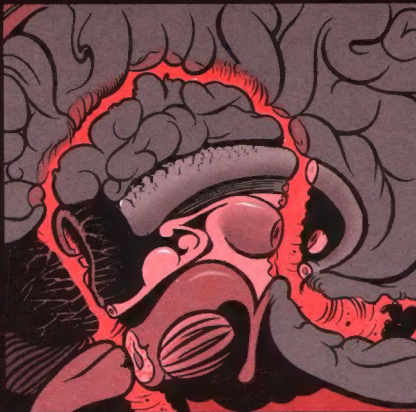
Then he began to dance, singing the ghost song, and all the others danced with him...



The Blood-clot boy jumped up and down as he danced, and going higher and higher, he gathered all the speed of a bullet.



He cut through the base of the Windsucker's brain and burrowed furiously within, killing the beast instantly.



Then he cut through its eye and let all the people out.



They thanked Blood-clot, and told him where he could find more people if he was so inclined. They told him of a town westward of the river, but that he must not take the left hand trail going up, because on that trail there lived a beautiful woman who was always challenging people to wrestle with her. This is what the Blood-Clot boy was looking for. "Ba!" he chirped, "This is my business in the world! To kill off all the bad things!"



"Come here, young man, come here. I want to wrestle with you."

NO...NOT-NOW... MAYBE AFTER I'VE RESTED A BIT I'LL COME WRESTLE WITH YOU...



He let her edge him over to the knives, and as they tottered over them, Blood-clot saw his chance and suddenly gave the woman a wrench, and threw her down onto the blades, which cut her body in two.



Now, while Blood-clot rested, he saw many large knives sticking up from the ground, partially hidden by flowers and grass. He then understood how the woman killed the people who were foolish enough to accept her invitation.



Blood-clot boy went on, and as he walked, the land around him began to grow black and lonely. Occasionally, a night-jitter would flutter against his cheek, or tickle the back of his neck with icy fingers, but he remained calm. A gigantic whorlwind circled over head and began to attune its song to the rhythms of his heartbeat and breathing, but Blood-clot simply blocked his ears. He came to an ancient forest, where the trees tried to stop his heart with garish frowns and unblinking smiles, but he maintained a confident, perky state of mind and continued his promenade beneath their haunted boughs, free from all guile, cunning, and deceit.



She called out to Blood-clot again, and this time, knowing her game, he went up to the witch and they began to grapple.



And so, the deeper he plunged into the haunted forest, the more keenly aware he became of his own purity and goodness. At the same time, however, he was also aware of being pulled to the source of something exceedingly base, that is, something the complete opposite of himself, something utterly ruined in all character and quality, nature and behavior, and so on...



By and by, this malignant force revealed itself to be nothing less than the blackest place on earth: the house of the Man-eater. Foe to all men, women, children, and domestic animals.

Across the clearing he noticed a little girl quietly watching him. Sensing that she was waiting for him to do something, he tip-toed softly over to her, and hilariously dead-pan, recited his lines in one clean take:

WATCH CLOSELY, THEREFORE, AND WHEN YOU CAN GET HOLD OF ONE OF MY BONES, TAKE IT AND CALL ALL THE DOGS TO YOU, AND WHEN THEY COME, CRY OUT, "BLOOD-CLOT BOY, THE DOGS ARE EATING YOUR BONES!"

OKAY

HEY GIRLIE, I AM GOING UP TO THAT HOUSE TO LET THE MAN-EATER KILL AND EAT ME!

UH-HUH

AND...UH...MAYBE AFTERWARDS WE CAN GET A SODA OR SOMETHING!

BITCHIN'!

He went up to the house and knocked on the door. The Man-eater was very happy to see him.

Then the little girl, who was watching closely, knocked on his door and asked him if she could have the bones for her "starving mother". The Man-eater bunched up the bones and gave them to her, as if on cue.

When the dogs came, she cried.

Once inside, The Man-eater took a large knife and went up to the Blood-clot boy and cut his throat. Then he put his body in a big kettle to cook. When the meat was cooked nicely, he drew the kettle from the fire, and ate the body, limb by limb, until it was all gone.

THANKS!

BLOOD-CLOT BOY! THE DOGS ARE EATING YOUR BONES!

Again, the Blood-clot boy went up to the house and knocked on the door. Again, the Man-eater appeared, this time feigning surprise, and looking a little bored.

yip!

WHAT A TRACK!

HAHA! WELL ISN'T THIS QUEERER THAN EVER!

Again, he took his knife and cut Blood-clot's throat, and threw him into the kettle. Again, when the meat was cooked, he ate it up, and again the little girl asked for the bones, which he gave her; and taking them out, she threw them to the dogs, crying, "Blood-clot boy! The dogs are eating you!" and again, Blood-clot arose from the pile of bones.

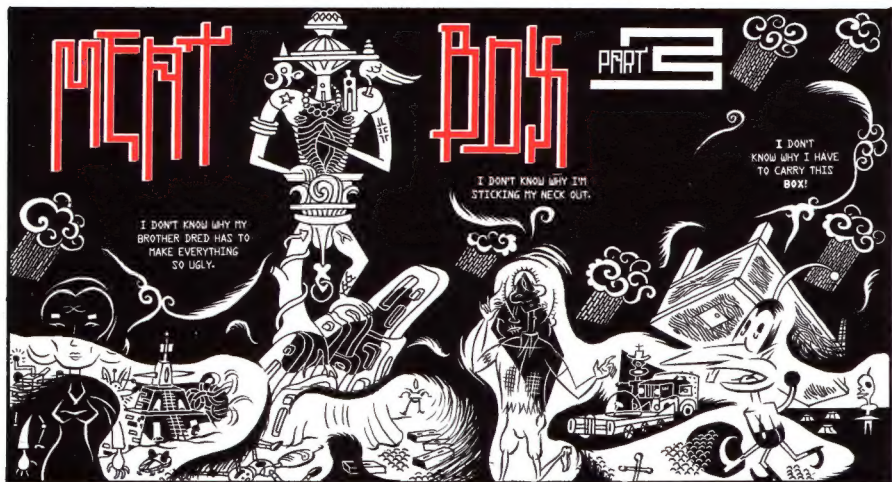
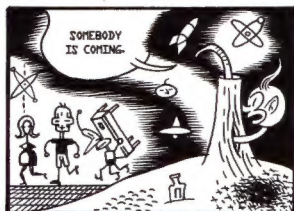
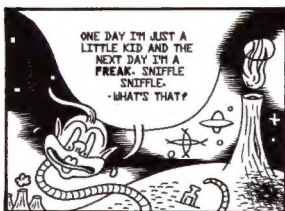
Now, anyone who has gone up against the Man-eater knows full well how this 're-animation' or 'reincarnation' game can be a dangerous one to play, and the odds of ever beating him (it's his favorite game) are pretty slim. The first and foremost reason being his appetite; he will eat you a thousand times if he has to, and he never gets tired and he never slackens his pace. That is why the duel that took place between the Man-eater and the Blood-clot boy is such an impressive one; the details of which are very, very interesting, rest assured, and can be read in any one of the countless volumes of prose and poetry devoted to it.

He and the little girl ended up living happily ever after, having many exciting adventures together...

So, without spoiling the ending for you, let us just say that the Man-eater was the sixth (but not the last) of the bad animals that was destroyed by the Blood-clot boy...

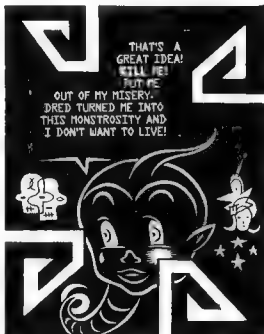
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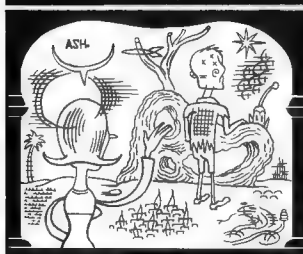
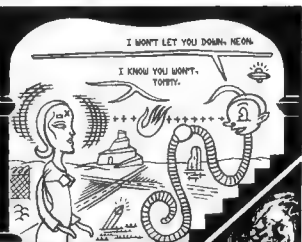
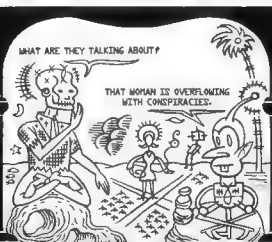
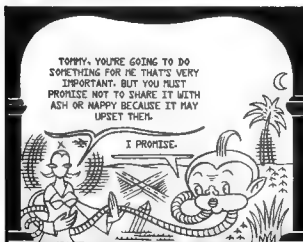
HA HA

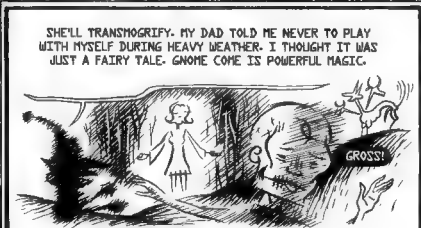
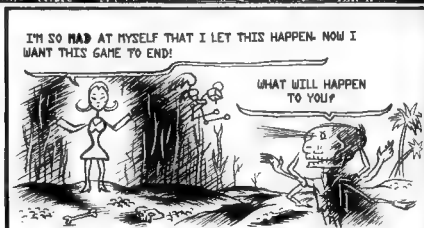
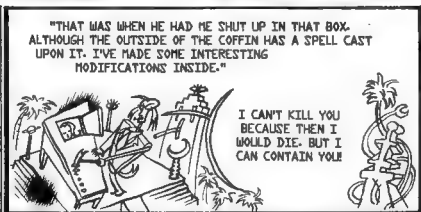
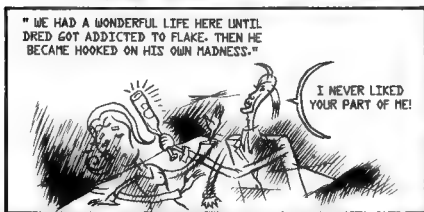
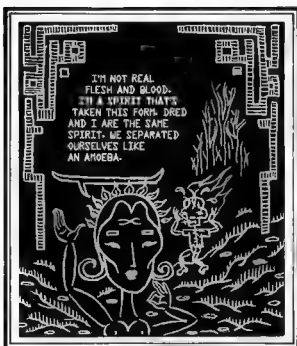




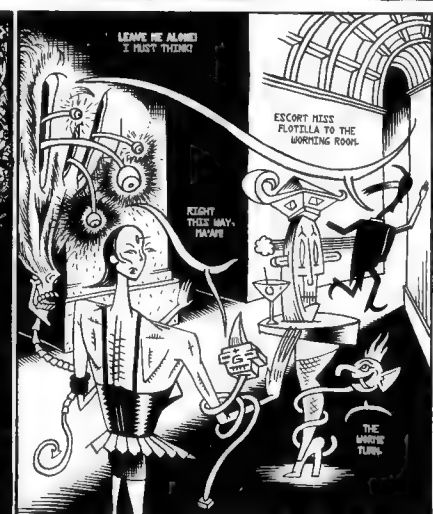
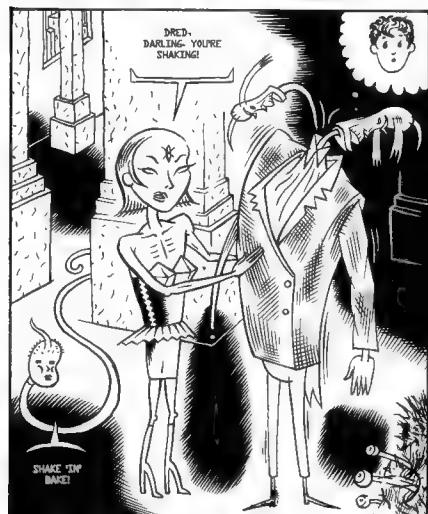
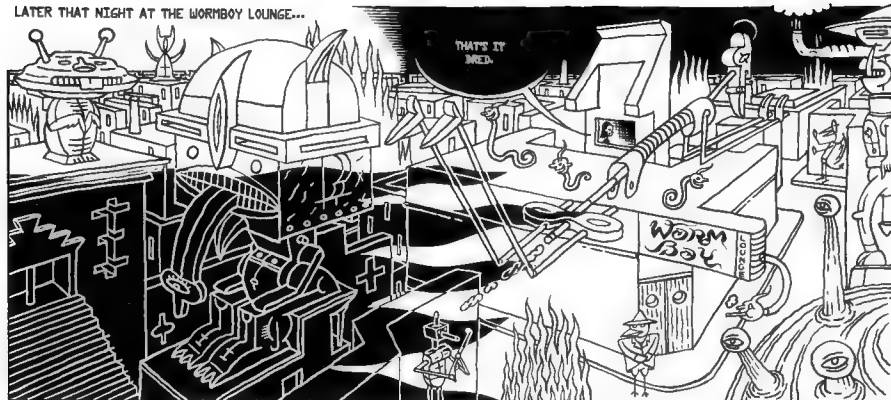
BUT I WOULDN'T SURVIVE LONG
IF WE RAN AWAY. MY BROTHER'S
POWERS ARE SUBSTANTIAL.
IT'S ALREADY TAKING
A TOLL ON MY BODY.

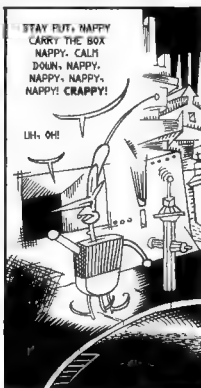
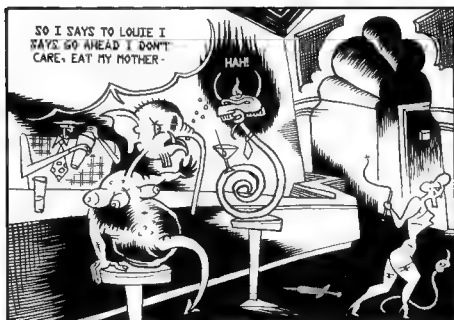


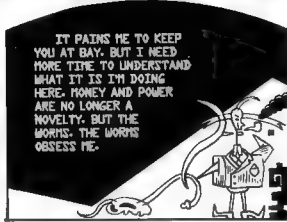
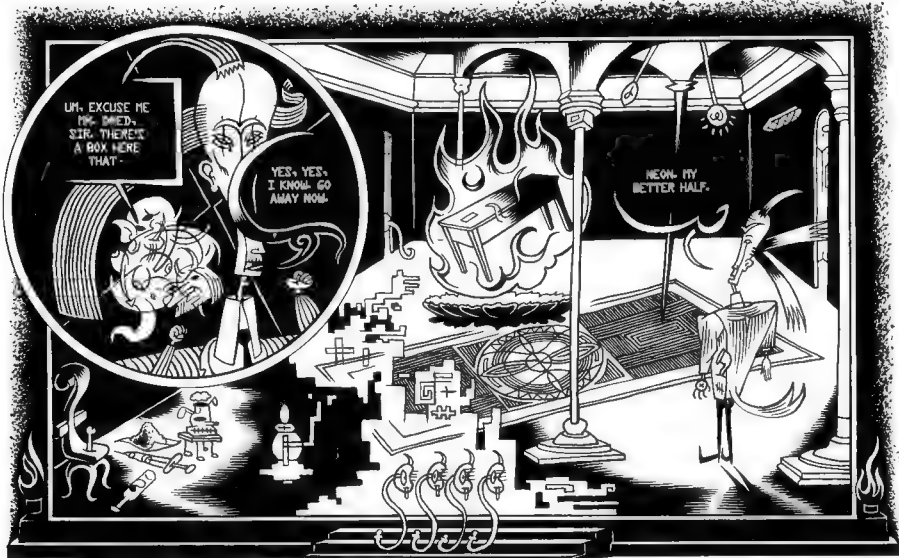


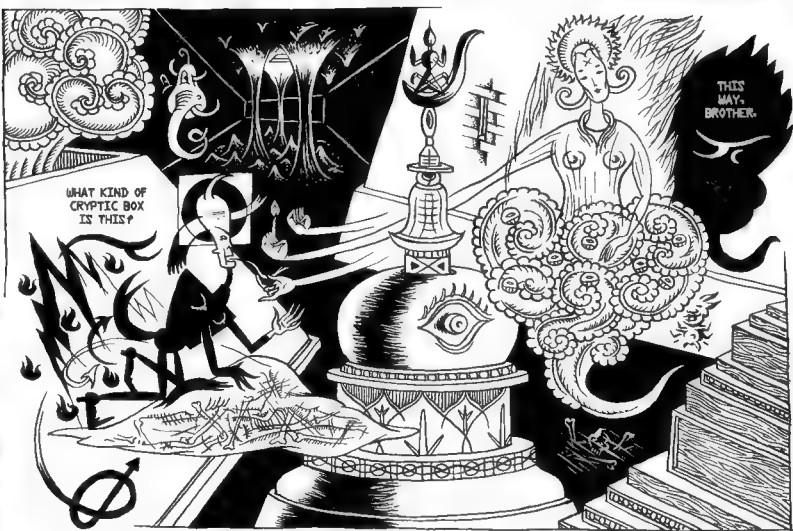
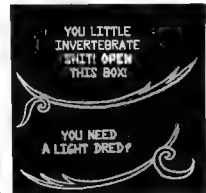
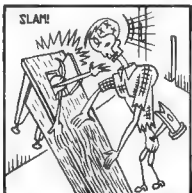


LATER THAT NIGHT AT THE WORMBOY LOUNGE...





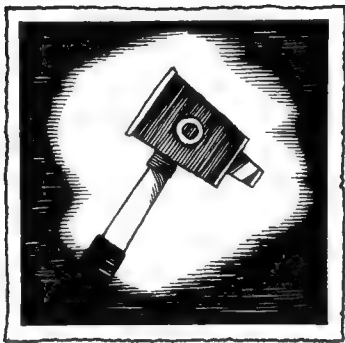




THE END PART 3







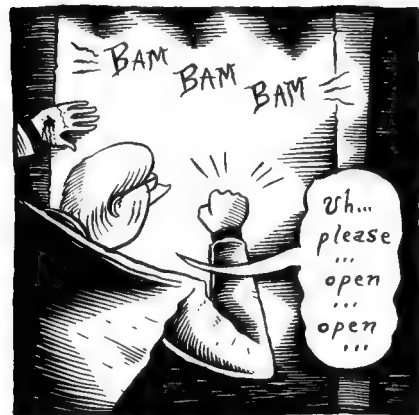
the Chuckling Whatsit

© 1997 Richard Sala

Previously ~

Broom, in Crow's Creek digging into the life of outsider artist Jarnac, learns about Celeste from Dr. Vogardus, and has an unsettling experience in the old windmill, during which he finds ~ then loses ~ the peculiar hanging doll. That same night he encounters the mysterious Mr. Ixnay ~ and ignores a warning to stay in his room. Grabbed by some members of G.A.S.H., Broom is rescued by Ixnay and his agent, Mia Moray, but soon runs into trouble again.







Where are the police?

They'll be here soon. Don't try to get up.

≡ Moan ≡ Well, once I've told the cops my story, I'm splitting this crazy town. I've got some bucks waiting for me in Frisco ~ and I'm gonna make old Peeke pay me triple for what I've been through.

≡ Snort ≡ Wait'll I tell him ~

Oh ~ hey, Doc ~ let me ask you a question: did you know your pal Jarnac may very well have been the original Gull Street Ghoul?

Wow ~ you did know ~ didn't you?

It ~ had occurred to me.

But, when? Not until after ~

~ until long after the exhibit had been up. Yes, when I realized the truth ~ well ~ I'm afraid I went a little mad.

Whoa ~ it was you ~ who ~ tore the place up?

≡ Sigh ≡ I suppose it's all water under the bridge now.

Yes. I destroyed the exhibit, took the dolls to the town dump. Apparently some enterprising junk dealer rescued them.

You see, the scales had fallen from my eyes. And, in a way, I finally understood the man.

~ He was like a large, dark, predatory bird.
His victims were, to him, no more than pathetic,
squirming fish ~ fated to be slaughtered,
skinned and eaten. ~

Oh ~ ≡chuckle≡ ~
Forgive me. I
suppose such talk
might be upsetting
to one born
under the sign
of Pisces ~ eh,
Mr. Broom?

Ha ha ~ No, of
course not! ~
Hey, how did
you know I was
a Pisces?

Oh ~ I happen to be a bit of an amateur
astrologer myself. As I was saying,
the reason I ~ dismantled the exhibit
was because I feared that others
would inevitably discern the truth:
That something intended to educate and
enlighten was, in fact, a grisly
display of human remains. ~
≡sigh≡ ~ But I suppose it
hardly matters anymore.

Okay, let's see if I can ~ for the sake of my
paycheck ~ sort this story out: About thirty
years ago, our buddy Tarnac ~ a serial killer,
nuttier than a fruitcake ~ makes some
extraordinarily ugly dolls out of ~ uh ~ pieces
of his victims. These things are very similar
to one particular doll with a noose around
its neck, which Tarnac apparently stole
from ~ er ~ Someone ...

Bet you didn't know
that that creepy
chuckling whatchit
may not have
been a Tarnac
original, eh, Doc?
Just heard that
one myself tonight.

Anyway, ~ he's picked up for one killing. The cops don't realize they've got the Gull Street Ghoul ~ and he gets tossed into Swann's. That's where you and your wife, Celeste, meet him. He's kept that chuckling doll with him. The other ~ "whatsits" ~ are all hidden in his childhood home, right here in Crow's Creek.

He busts out of Swann's, taking your ~ er ~ troubled wife with him. Then, fifteen years later, you happen upon him living up here. He sees you, knows his past has finally caught up with him ~ and hangs himself. You discover his body, and all the ~ er ~ thingumajigs ~ naive art, folk art, whatever.



You're intrigued by his obsessive creativity. The guy was a classic outsider artist. So you decide to preserve his studio environment as a sort of museum, for interested parties to study. ~ Although, I've got to say it's kind of strange to enshrine the memory of the guy who ran off with your wife. But I guess that's none of my business.



Let's see ~ where was I ?

Oh okay ~ So ~ ten years ago Root shows up and writes an article about the exhibit. Something about Jarnac bothers him, disturbs him, scares him. He subsequently gives up straight journalism and becomes a horoscope columnist. But he can't forget Jarnac. He probably figured out the whole Ghoul angle.

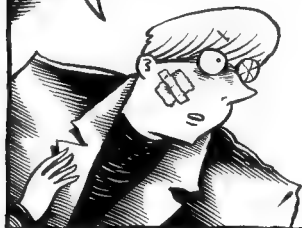
And you realized it, too, around that same time, ~ right? ~ maybe because of the questions Root was asking. ~

So you trash the exhibit and chuck all the ~ er ~ whatchamacallits.

Soon, though, the Jarn things are showing up in second hand stores, and collectors, remembering the articles and the exhibit, begin hunting for them.

As Jarnac's cult reputation in the art world grows, Root decides to write a book revealing his solution to the long-unsolved mystery of the Gull Street Ghoul's identity. He returns to Crow's Creek and snoops around, interviews you, and puts the story together like I'm doing. And ~ oh yezh ~ at some point he finds an underground room in the windmill.

Wow ~ I nearly forgot, with all that's happened tonight ~ there was somebody in the windmill earlier this evening ~ somebody who tried to grab me.



Hmm. Probably some derelict. Wayfaring types often help themselves to the shelter the structure provides. And, by the way, I know that mill quite well, and I can assure you ~ there is no underground room.

Really?



Okay. Whatever. Anyway, ~ Root uncovers something important ~ important enough that someone decides to get rid of him. This mysterious someone follows Root to Frisco and spies on him. Root is observed giving his cronies the lowdown on his Tarnac research ~ and, consequently, everyone attending that tea party is doomed.

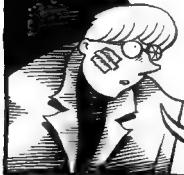


So what if not one of those stargazers cares a whit about Root's book, his theories, or anything having to do with some folk artist with a screw loose. The killer ~ all decked out as Tarnac's old alter ego ~ doesn't want to take any chances.



My, this is becoming very dramatic and fanciful.

Hey, I know this sounds nuts ~ but there had to be something that Root found out ~ or came close to finding out ~ that got all those soothsayers snuffed.



This neo-Ghoul kills all of Root's confidantes, but can't find the manuscript. That's where I come in ~ purely by accident. A student ~ Abigail ~ swipes it, I now realize, right under my nose.



But the killer is watching and he snatches Abigail, and the manuscript and brings them here to Crow's Creek. The manuscript is ripped up and thrown in the trash. Later it's burned up by some local bumpkin.



I figure Abigail gets free, but ~ is caught. The killer knows me 'cause he tries to implicate me in her murder. But things get complicated by another drama being played out involving some screwy secret society and a labyrinthian revenge plot.



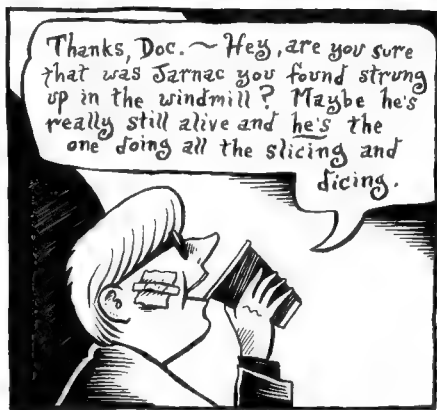
Man, ~ what a headache I've got. Hey, where are those cops anyway? I want to get going.

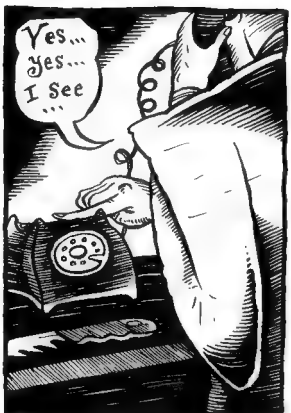
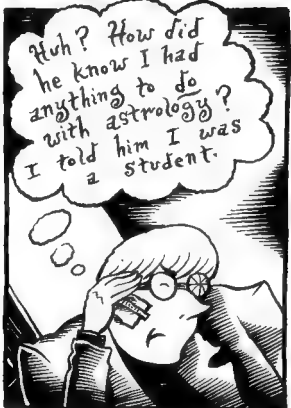


Here, take these. I'll phone the police again and find out when they're coming.



Thanks, Doc. ~ Hey, are you sure that was Jarnac you found strung up in the windmill? Maybe he's really still alive and he's the one doing all the slicing and dicing.







MID-LIFE CRISIS

PENNY
VAN
HORN
1996

PAULA WAS OUR
NEIGHBOR AND
CHILD CARE PRO-
VIDER, SHE HAD
BEEN WATCHING
OUR CHILDREN
SINCE THEY WERE
INFANTS.

GOOD MORNING, GIRLS!
LOOK WHO'S COMING
TO PLAY WITH JOEY
TODAY!

I FORESEE
DIRTY DIAPERS IN
YOUR FUTURE...

YOU'RE A GLUTTON
FOR PUNISHMENT,
PAULA-- THANK GOD!



THANKS,
PAULA. SEE
YOU TOMORROW.



WE'RE
GOING
TO
SEND
VIDA
TO A
DAY
SCHOOL
SOON.



GOOD, BECAUSE
I'M PHASING
OUT CHILD
CARE SO I
CAN DO
PHOTO-
GRAPHY.

"LET ME
SHOW YOU
THE
DARKROOM
AND
STUDIO
WEVE
ADDED ON
TO THE
BACK OF
THE
HOUSE."




HELLO,
YOU HAVE REACHED
BLUESKIES STUDIO.
PLEASE LEAVE A
MESSAGE AFTER
THE TONE.

HI PAULA,
CAN YOU
POSSIBLY
WATCH
VIDA THIS
EVENING?
CALL ME,
OK?

BUSINESS IS TERRIBLE.
I HAVE ONE CLIENT!
AND I SPENT ALL OUR
SAVINGS ADDING ON
THE STUDIO.





"MY HUSBAND,
DANNY AND I
ARE FIGHTING
CONSTANTLY.
THINGS ARE SO
BAD AROUND HERE
THAT I STARTED
GOING TO
CHURCH AGAIN.
I'M SO
DEPRESSED!"

JUST AFTER THAT, MY FRIEND
VICKI AND I DISCUSSED PAULA'S
SITUATION:

SO WHO'S
THAT GUY
HANGING
AROUND
PAULA'S?

OH, THAT'S
BOBBY! PAULA
MET HIM AT
HER CHURCH.
GET THIS!



DOESN'T
PAULA
HAVE
ENOUGH
PROBLEMS
WITHOUT
TAKING
HIM
ON?



"HE'S
HOMELESS,
AN
ALCOHOLIC,
AND...
HE'S
STAYING
IN
HER
DARK-
ROOM!"



I GUESS THERE'S
ALWAYS ROOM FOR
MORE ADVERSITY
IN ONE'S LIFE!



A COUPLE OF WEEKS LATER
MY HUSBAND CAME HOME
WITH THIS UNBELIEVABLE
GOSSIP:



"JACK
JUST
TOLD
ME
THAT
DANNY
CAUGHT
PAULA
IN BED

WITH
THAT
HOME-
LESS
GUY
SHE
SAID
SHE WAS
HELPING
TO



REHABILITATE.



DANNY THREW THEM OUT WITH
NOTHING BUT THEIR CLOTHES!"



JEEZ!

WAS THE ONLY
RESPONSE
I COULD
MUSTER.



LATER
THAT
NIGHT
PAULA
HAD TO
BREAK
INTO
HER
HOUSE
TO GET
HER
PURSE



AND THE KEYS TO THE TRUCK.



SHE WIPED OUT THE CHECKING
ACCOUNT NEXT MORNING...



CALLED VICKI FROM A MOTEL



...AND WHILE DANNY WAS AT WORK,



AND
GATHERED
BOBBY'S
STUFF
FROM THE
DARKROOM.



THEY PACKED HER THINGS

THEY MOVED IT ALL TO A TRAILER



ON THE EDGE OF TOWN.



WE HEARD NOTHING
FROM PAULA FOR A WHILE...

PAULA! WHAT A SURPRISE!
VICKI'S NOT HERE. WHO'S THAT?



THEN
SHE
SHOWED
UP AT
VICKI
AND
JACK'S



THIS IS
BOBBY'S
SON, JESSE.
IT LOOKS
LIKE I'VE
ALREADY--
SOB! LOST
CUSTODY

OF MY OWN SON... SNIFF! LOOK,
I CAME TO BORROW SOME WARM
CLOTHES TO PANHANDLE IN.



HEY, NOW... LET'S NOT RESORT
TO THAT. HERE, I CAN LOAN
YOU TEN BUCKS. WHERE
IS BOBBY, ANYWAY?



OH, HE'S
HAVING SOME
PROBLEMS
WITH SOBRIETY
RIGHT NOW.
NOT FOR LONG,
I HOPE.

JACK FILLS VICKI IN:

BUT PAULA WON'T EVEN
FIT INTO MY CLOTHES!

I KNOW,
KNOW...
I THINK THIS
IS WHAT THEY
CALL "A CRY
FOR HELP."



HEY!
BEFORE
YOU GET
ON THE
HORN,
THERE'S
EVEN
MORE
!!!

AS SAD AS
PAULA'S
STORY WAS
BECOMING,
IT STILL
EXCITED US
BECAUSE OF
ITS SENSATIONAL
GOSSIP VALUE.
WE WERE
QUICK TO
UPDATE EACH
OTHER.



PENNY!
PHONE.

ONE DAY WHILE DRIVING...

COULD THAT BE PAULA
UP AHEAD???

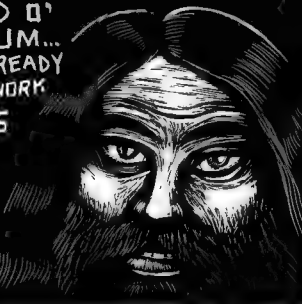


THAT'S A
PRETTY
UNMISTAKABLE
SILHOUETTE...

AND THIS MAKES
IT A LOT CLEARER
WHAT DANNY MEANT
WHEN HE SAID:



"NOW, I TOLD PAULA SHE COULD
COME BACK HOME IF SHE
GOT RID O'
THAT BUM...
HE'S ALREADY
OUT OF WORK.
SO SHE'S
SELLIN'
JERKY
OUT THE
BACK O'
THE
TRUCK."





SOB! I MISS YOU AND THE KIDS SO MUCH!! AND I MISS MY OWN BABY! SNIFF!

WE MISS YOU, TOO... LONG TIME NO SEE!

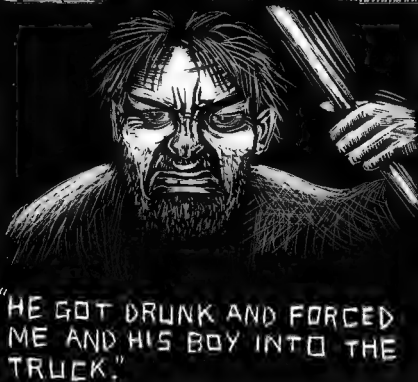


DID DANNY TELL YOU ABOUT BOBBY'S LATEST STUNT?

NO!



HE HEADED TOWARDS MEXICO. WE JUMPED OUT WHEN HE STOPPED FOR GAS. I HAD TO CALL DANNY TO WIRE US MONEY FOR BUS TICKETS.



"HE GOT DRUNK AND FORCED ME AND HIS BOY INTO THE TRUCK."

IT'S WEIRD-- BUT WHEN BOBBY'S SOBER, HE'S THE SWEETEST MAN ALINE.



FINALLY, HE GOT PICKED UP
FOR DRUNKEN DRIVING AND PUT
IN JAIL...! SCUSE ME -- LOOKS
LIKE A CUSTOMER DRIVING UP.



LET'S
SEE
SOME
OF
THAT
JERKY!



BUT, PAULA -- YOUR WHOLE
SITUATION SOUNDS LIKE A
NIGHTMARE! YOU'VE LOST YOUR
HOME AND FAMILY FOR THIS GUY?



I KNOW IT
SOUNDS CRAZY,
BUT DESPITE
WHAT YOU
MIGHT THINK,
I'M STILL
HAPPIER
WITH
BOBBY.



WE WANT
MORE JOOKY! TOOKY
JOOKY!



WHAT A CRAZY
SCENE! THIS
IS SURREAL!

'BYE PAULA -
THE KIDS ARE
REALLY TIRED.



BOBBY REMAINS
INCARCERATED



FOR ENDANGERING HIS SON'S
LIFE IN VARIOUS DRUNKEN
DRIVING INCIDENTS.



PAULA VISITS HIM FREQUENTLY. HER
PHONE AND ELECTRICITY HAVE BEEN TURNED
OFF FOR FAILURE TO PAY. WE HEAR THIS SECOND-HAND
FROM HER EX-HUSBAND. IT SEEMS TO US THAT SHE HAS
HAD A FALL FROM GRACE, BUT WHO ARE WE TO SAY?

I love to LAUGH —



why don't you?

by ALEKSANDAR ZOGRAF



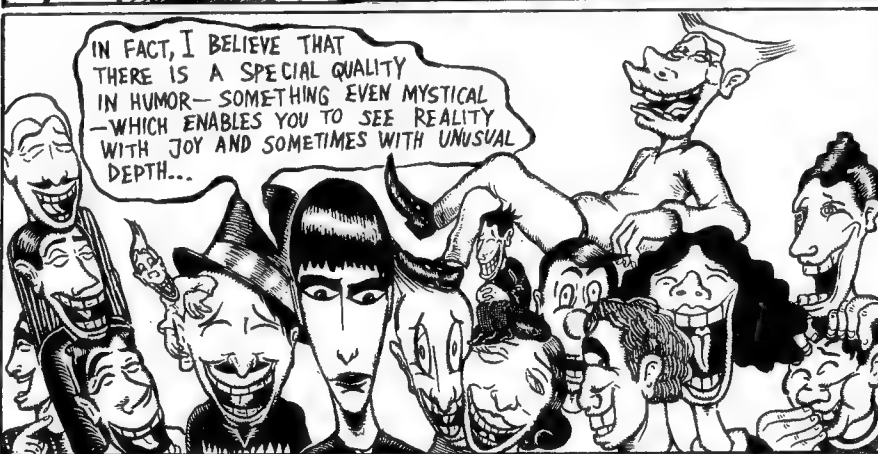
BY READING MY COMICS
(ESPECIALLY THE STORIES ABOUT THE
CRISIS IN YUGOSLAVIA) ONE CAN THINK
THAT I AM A PERSON OBSESSED WITH
THE DARK SIDE OF EXISTENCE...



BUT I'M NOT!



IN FACT, I BELIEVE THAT
THERE IS A SPECIAL QUALITY
IN HUMOR—SOMETHING EVEN MYSTICAL
—WHICH ENABLES YOU TO SEE REALITY
WITH JOY AND SOMETIMES WITH UNUSUAL
DEPTH...



AS A CHILD I WOULD SPONTANEOUSLY SLIP INTO A STATE OF LUCID DREAMING, BY BECOMING AWARE THAT I WAS DREAMING...

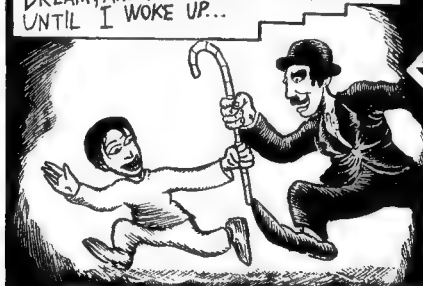
HEY...THIS MUST BE A DREAM!



SO I WAS ABLE TO OCCASIONALLY TAKE CONTROL OVER MY DREAMS, BUT SOMETIMES IT WOULD ALSO TRIGGER THAT STRONG AND IRRATIONAL FEAR DEEP INSIDE ME...



AND I LEARNED TO OVERCOME THAT FEAR BY INTENTIONALLY DIRECTING THE ATTENTION OF MY DREAMING SELF TOWARDS THE FUNNY THINGS...I WOULD SIMPLY LET CHARLIE CHAPLIN ENTER MY DREAM, AND WE WERE JOKING AROUND UNTIL I WOKE UP...



I ALWAYS PREFERRED TO WATCH COMEDIES, MAYBE BECAUSE I RECOGNIZED THE AURA OF IRONY AND LIGHTHEARTEDNESS WHICH THEY EMANATED...



BUT WHY DO WE LAUGH AT ALL? IT SEEMS THAT IT IS THE WAY OUR BODY REACTS TO SOME SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS INSIDE OUR MIND...



OR MAYBE THERE IS SOME OTHER EXPLANATION? MAYBE HUMOROUS EXPRESSION SHOULD NOT BE RELATED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE HUMAN RACE? AND HAVEN'T YOU SEEN YOUR DOG BEARING THAT SMILE-LIKE EXPRESSION?



A FEW TIMES IN MY LIFE (INCLUDING
ONCE WHILE I WAS IN A STANDING ARMY)
I HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME SORT OF
TRANCE (OR WAS IT HYSTERIA?) WHEN I
WOULD LAUGH INTENSIVELY FOR HALF AN
HOUR OR SO... EVERYBODY THOUGHT THAT
I WAS CRAZY, OR HAVING A NERVOUS
BREAKDOWN OR SOMETHING...



...BUT IT WAS ALWAYS A MAGNIFICENT
EXPERIENCE--TO SEE THINGS AS IF THEY
WERE FUNNY...WHILE IT LASTED, I FELT
THAT EVERYTHING WAS SO UNIMPORTANT,
AND YET SO FULL OF MEANING...



OR COULD IT BE THAT THESE 'HYSTERICAL'
FITS OF LAUGHTER ARE JUST THE NATURAL
WAY TO RELEASE YOURSELF FROM THE NEGATIVE
ENERGY... I REMEMBER AN INCIDENT FROM
THE TIME WHEN I WAS WORKING IN
AN ANIMATION STUDIO... IN ORDER TO MEET
THE DEADLINE, WE HAD TO FINISH THE
EPISODE OF THAT INFANTILE
ROBOTIC-ANIMATED TV SERIES...

HURRY... WE HAVE TO
FINISH THIS EPISODE, OR
ELSE WE ARE DOOMED!

GOD-DAMNED
FLYING
BEARS!



WE WORKED LATE AT NIGHT, AND
EVERYBODY FELT LIKE WE WERE UNDER
GREAT PRESSURE, AND THEN TWO ANIMATORS
SUDDENLY JUMPED FROM THEIR SEATS
AND STARTED TO IMITATE THE FIGHT
OF THE TWO MONKEYS...



EVERYBODY WAS LAUGHING LIKE
CRAZY, BUT AFTER SOME TIME WE
FELT RELAXED, AND IT HELPED US
TO FINISH OUR DARN JOB...



SO... HUMOR WILL SET YOU
FREE, MARK MY WORDS!

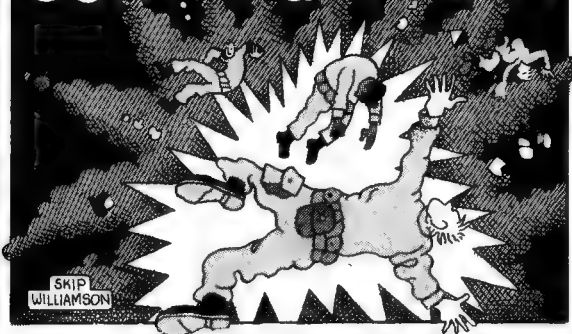


THE END.

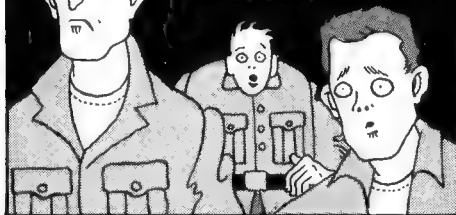
THE TALKS BROKE OFF, AM-
BASSADORS WERE RECALLED.
IT WAS...



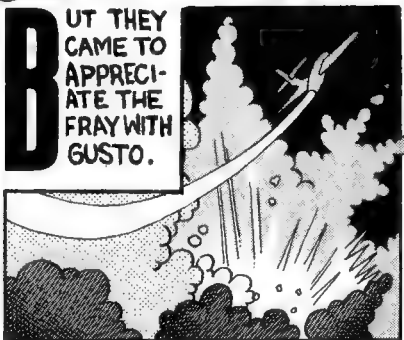
CONELAGRATION



THE YOUNG CONSCRIPTS
WERE AFRAID AND
UNWILLING.



BUT THEY
CAME TO
APPRECIATE THE
FRAY WITH
GUSTO.



THEY GAINED AN EPIPHANY ON THE BATTLEFIELD. THEY BECAME
THE BEARERS OF THE FIERY CROSS, THE AGENTS OF THE JIHAD.



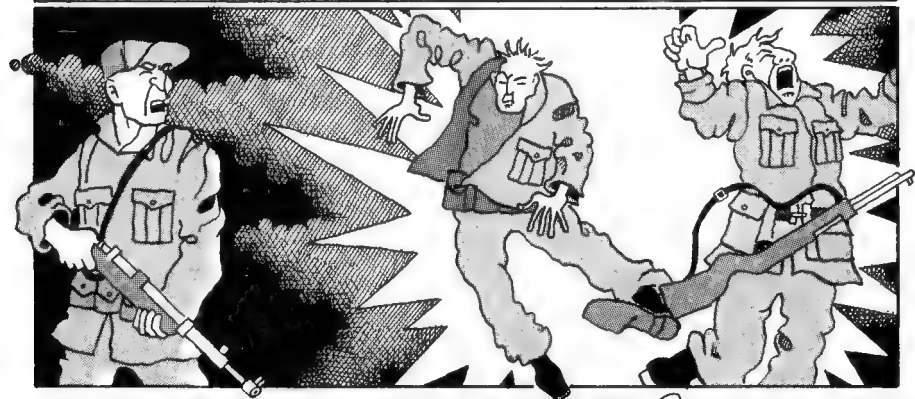


THE WAR WAS AN ECCLESIASTICAL EXPERIENCE.



THE IMMOLATION WAS EXCITING AND OMNIPOTENT. AND THEY CAME TO LOVE THEIR WORK.

HOWITZERS AND GRENADES SPLATTERING FLESH AND SPLINTERING BONE WERE A CORROBORATION OF GOD'S RANDOM ANGER. THEY WERE PARTICIPANTS IN A GRISLY DIVINITY.



THE INCONTROVERTIBLE SLAUGHTER WAS AT ONCE INDISCRIMINATE YET OF CELESTIAL DESIGN.



THE ANGEL OF DEATH WAS STILL AN ANGEL.

SO WHAT WOULD THEY DO WHEN
THE WAR ENDED?

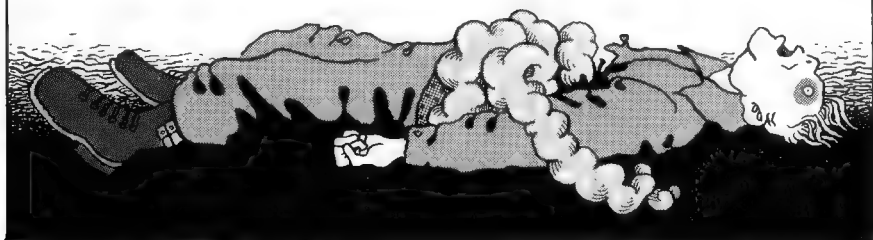


THE WAR WAS VISCERAL MEAT.
HOME WAS THIN GRUEL.

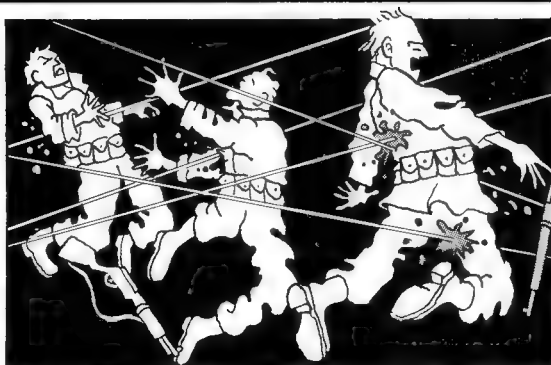
AT HOME THEIR AB-
SENCE WAS TENABLE...



... BECAUSE THERE WAS A WAR TO BE FOUGHT. AT HOME IT WAS
NOT CONCEIVABLE THAT THEIR LOVED ONES WOULD PREFER
THE EDGY SLAUGHTER TO HOME AND FAMILY. BUT TO THE
REVERENTIAL WARRIORS...

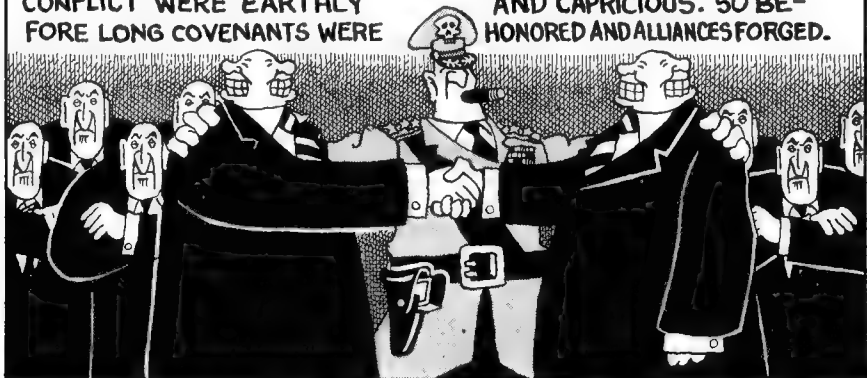


... HOME WAS AN IRON
CAGE OF NESTING INSTINCT
AND A PANTHEISTIC COM-
PROMISE TO SOCIAL ORDER.



THERE WAS NO GOD THERE. NO ANGRY SPIRIT.
NO ARMAGEDDON OR ARTFUL BEDLAM.

THOUGH WHOLESALE BUTCHERY WAS TRANSCENDENT, THE HOARY GENERALS AND GEEZERLY DESPOTS WHOSE MINISTRY DIRECTED THE CONFLICT WERE EARTHLY AND CAPRICIOUS. SO BEFORE LONG COVENANTS WERE HONORED AND ALLIANCES FORGED.



GARRISONS WERE DISBANDED.
BATTALIONS WERE
DEMOMOBILIZED.
POLITICIANS
PREENED.



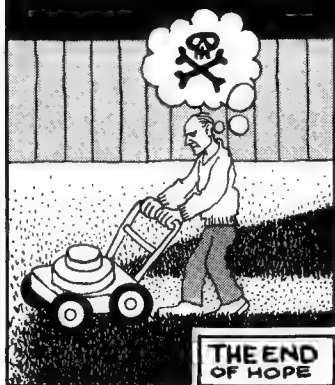
IT WAS AN EVIL DAY FOR
THE DOGS OF WAR.



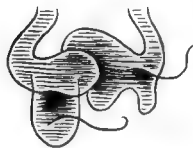
THE TROOPS, CONSECRATED BY THE DOXOLOGY OF BLOOD, WERE REASSIGNED TO THE BOSOMS OF THEIR FAMILIES WHERE...

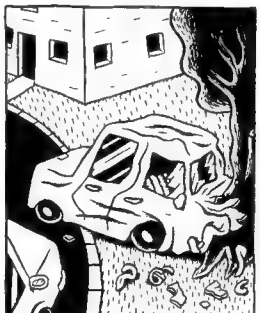
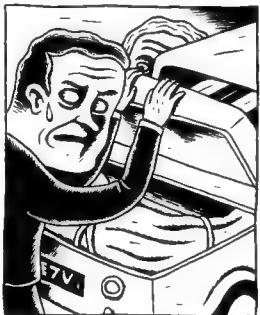


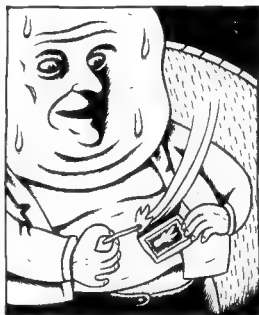
...INSTEAD OF EPIC BATTLE,
THEIR MISSION WOULD BE
TO TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE.

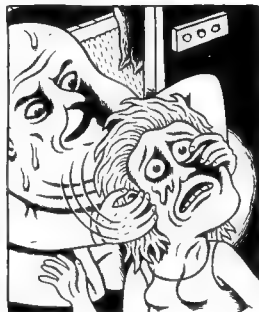


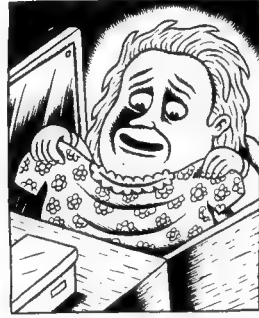
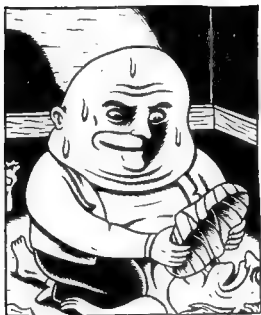
Silent Stories





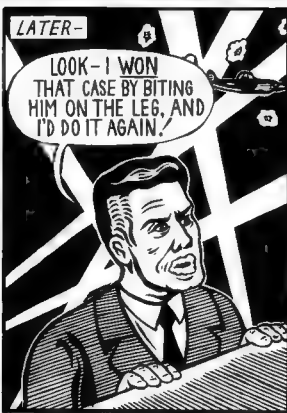
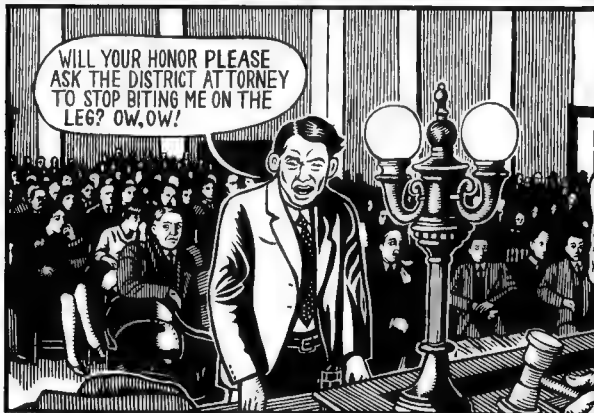
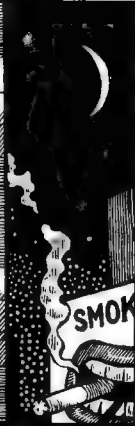


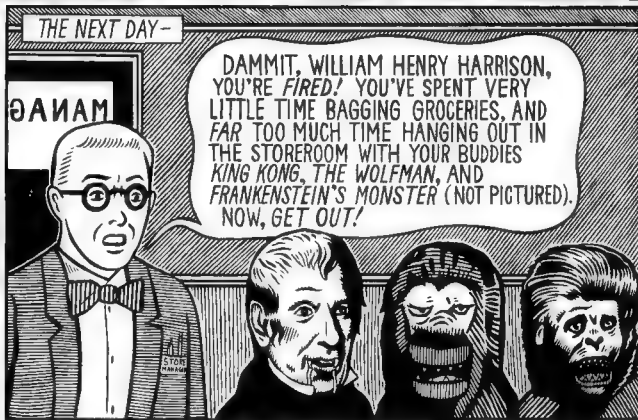
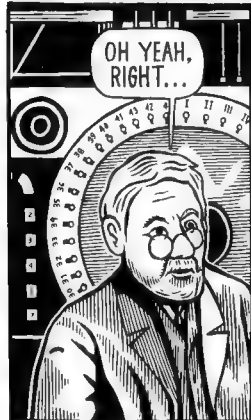
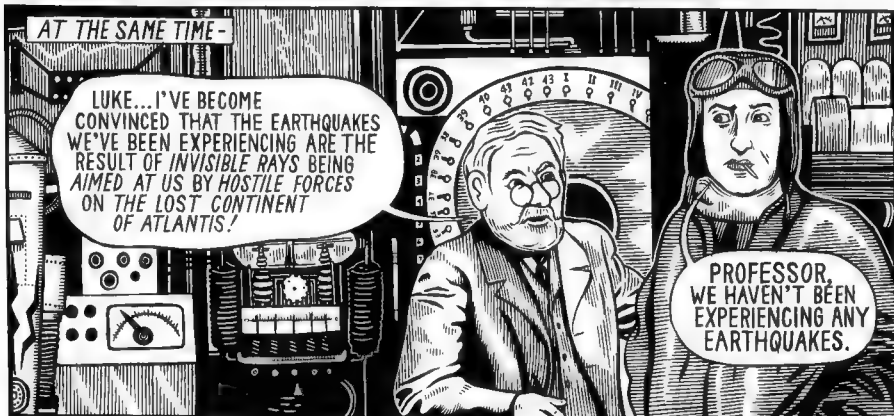
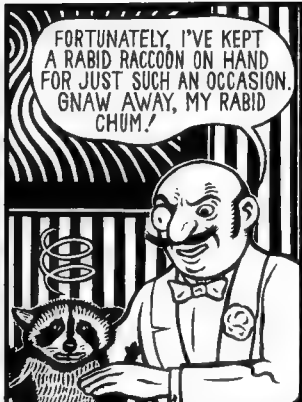
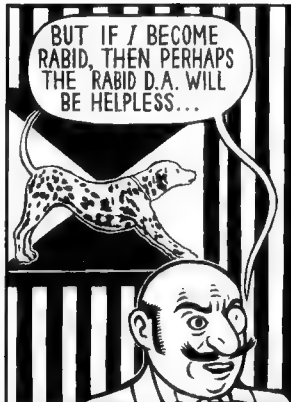




RABID

DISTRICT ATTORNEY





AND, NEARBY—

THAT RACCOON
MAULED ME SILLY! BUT I'M
STILL NOT RABID!

MEANWHILE—

♪ I'M A BUTCHER ♪
SLICING MEAT. THAT'S
MY JOB, LA DÍ DA ♪
♪ DÍ DA ♪

MR. BUTCHER? WILL YOU
COME AND VISIT A LITTLE BOY WHO'S
VERY, VERY SICK IN THE HOSPITAL?
IT'D MEAN A LOT TO HIM, FOR
SOME REASON.

YES,
OF COURSE.

OH,
EXCELLENT.

AT THE HOSPITAL—

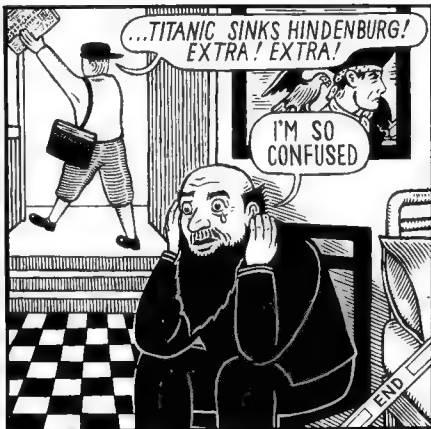
WHAT CAN I
DO FOR YOU TOMMY?

I'M PATHETIC,
AREN'T I?

YES... YES,
YOU ARE.

THEN DO
THIS... ONE
THING FOR ME...





ON NEWSSTANDS NOW:

MARCH NO. 8

CRIMINAL

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

HE WORKS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LAW!

ONLY 10¢



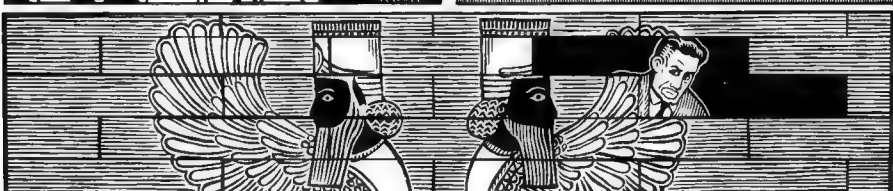
MARCH NO. 14

FLYING DISTRICT ATTORNEY

YOU'LL BELIEVE A DISTRICT ATTORNEY CAN FLY!

ONLY 10¢

THESE GANGSTERS TRIED TO TAKE HIM FOR A RIDE - BUT THEY FORGOT HE COULD FLY!



AW SHIT! RUNNING OUT OF FUEL...

WELL... AIM'T GOT ANY FUCKING IDEAS SO I'LL
TELL YOU A PATHETIK STORY ABOUT...

CHRONIC THROAT
INFECTION

THE WHITE PAGE
SYNDROME

...ABOUT WHAT
I SEE FROM
MY WINDOW!?!

THE MAN from the SEWER

IN THIS TOWN
YOU KNOW
THERE'S MANY
KIND OF
FREAKS!

DOWN WAY

HELP!

HELP!

AT THE CAR ACCI-
DENT, CUT YOUR
FACE WITH THAT
BUTCHER KNIFE!

THE GIRL IN FRONT OF
THE "FLUX CENTER
INSECTARIUM"



NEAR MAMILLA PARK,
A BUUNCH OF AMPUTED
FROM THE "BILL
COARSCUT HOSPITAL"

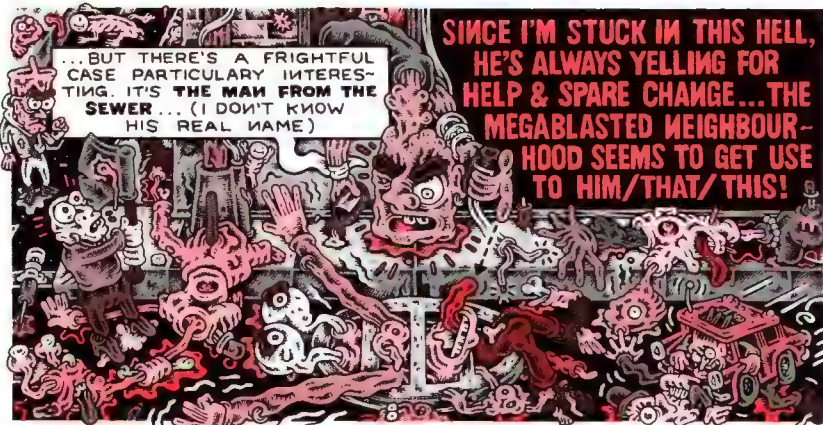


BLOBS FROM URETHRO-
PIA ROBBING THE
"MONGO BONGO
DICK BANK"...

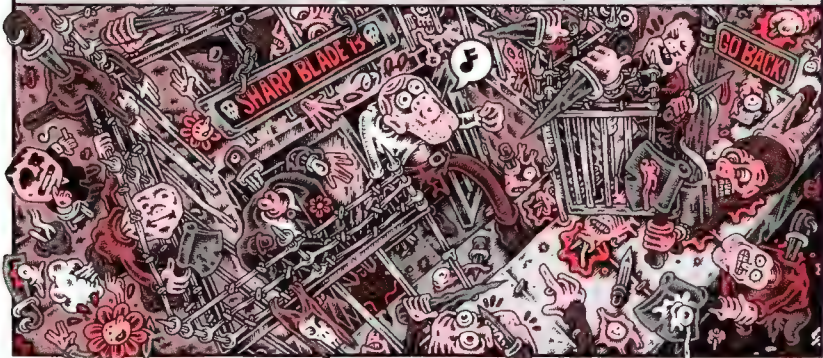


...BUT THERE'S A FRIGHTFUL
CASE PARTICULARLY INTERES-
TING. IT'S THE MAN FROM THE
SEWER... (I DON'T KNOW
HIS REAL NAME)

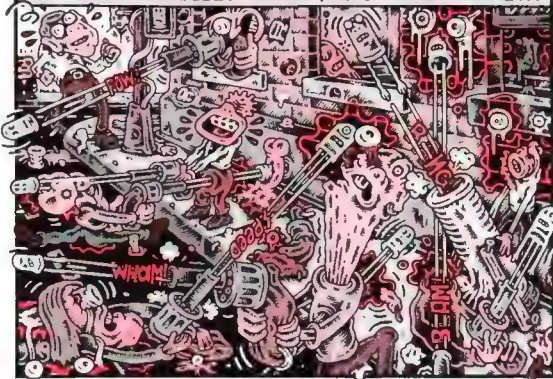
SINCE I'M STUCK IN THIS HELL,
HE'S ALWAYS YELLING FOR
HELP & SPARE CHANGE...THE
MEGABLASTED NEIGHBOUR-
HOOD SEEMS TO GET USE
TO HIM/THAT/THIS!



BY THE SACRED EXPLODED JEOVAN'S PUTREFIED BOWELS! IT HAPPENS ALL
THE TIMES!!! WHEN A STRANGER CAME AND, BY AN INCREDIBLING LUCK,
CAN ESCAPE THE "SHARP BLADE" SUBWAY STATION, END OF GREY LINE 13...



...AND IF, AFTER A PERILOUS SHORT WALK
ON "RED McBULLET ROAD", HE'S STILL ALIVE...



INFALLIBLY, THE JERK
STUMBLE UPON THIS
MAD, "SOCIAL PAIN"!



MILLION OF ENCODED
GERMS! CAN...CAN A-
NYBODY REMOVE THIS
POOR GUY OUT? GNIH!
SEEMS TO BE STUCK
REAL TIGHT! GHAN!



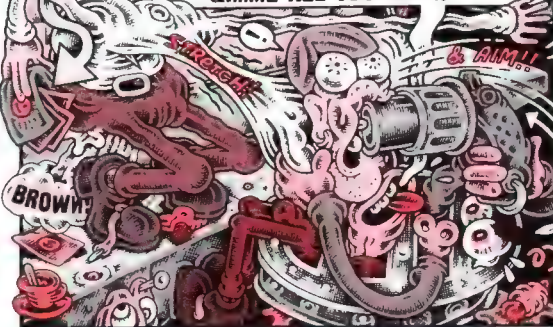
FORGET THAT MAN! THERE'S NOTHING TO DO
IN THIS WORLD OF CHAOS & DESORDER...

BUT... (SOB!) WHAT CAN I DO
TO SAVE YOU FROM YOUR...
(CRY!) POVERTY HOLE?



...AND... AS HE SHOW OUT IS WALLET...

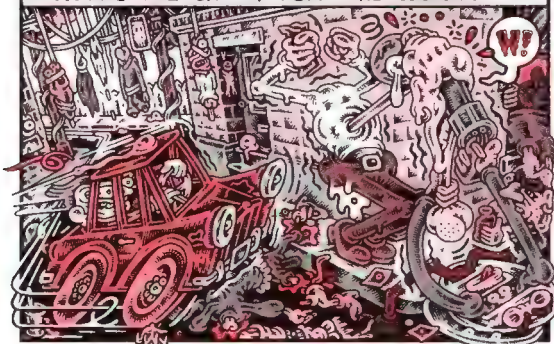
HOLD YOUR DIRTY HANDS UP YOU
FUCKING RETENTIVE ANAL HUMAN FART!!!
GIMME ALL YOU GOT!!!



HELP! HELP!
I'M THREATENED!!!



AND IT'S NOT FINISH! AS USUAL, A STOLEN CAR EMERGE FROM EMBALMING BLVD AT ULTRA FAST SPEED!!! IS IT A DRUNK ACCESSORY? ... WAS THE CRY OF HELP THE SIGNAL?

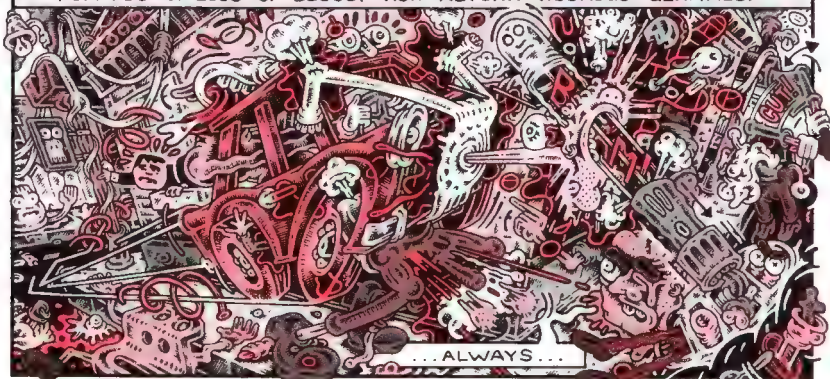


THE NEXT 4 FRAMES
AREN'T A PART OF
THE STORY SO ...
... YOU CAN TEAR
THEM OUT IF YOU
WANT AND I ...
DRAW THAT TO ...

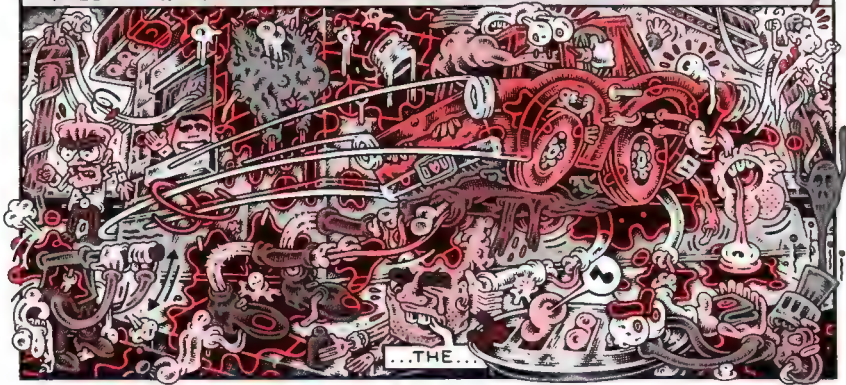
AS THE CAR TOUCH THE FIRST SUPERFICIAL SKIN MOLECULES,
THE BULLET IS SHOT. LAST MOMENTS ALIVE.



INSTANT DEATH. BRAIN & CRANIUM EXPLODED. FIRST BONES FRACTURES.
POPPYDOWN LOSS OF BLOOD. NON-RETURN WOUNDED GENITALS.

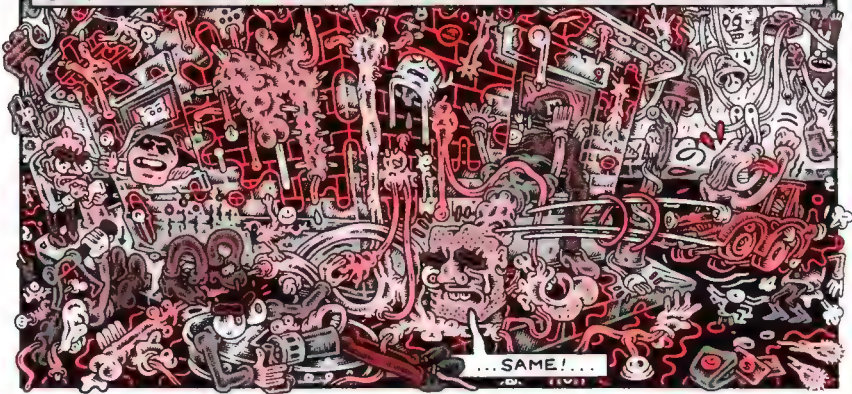


HIP & PELVIS MULTIPLE BREAKINGS. INTESTINES, BOWELS & GUTS AT FRESH AIR. REMAINS OF BRAIN ON WALLS. MELTED SPINAL CHORD.



...THE...

DEEP MEGA~SUPER HOT & PURPLE MAD HUMAN STRIPPED BODY MESS.



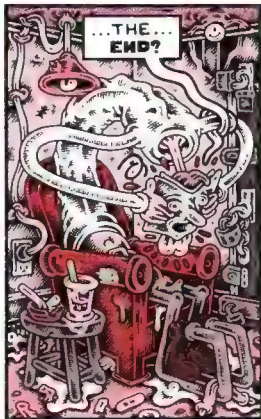
... SAME! ...

...TO GIVE YOU A
GOOD LESSON YOU
GAWKS: OVERLOCK
YOU AT HOME AND
DON'T PLAY IN THE
* TRAFFIC!!!

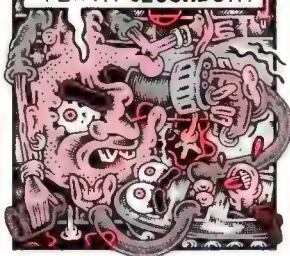
The end



...THE...
END?



WELL... (SWALLOW!) FOR
FURTHERMORE INFOR-
MATIONS PLEASE RE-
FER TO YOUR LOCAL
NEWSPAPERS 'CAUSE
I THINK I'M GONA BE
PRETTY FUCKING
BUZY FOR THE NEXT
FEW... SECONDS...



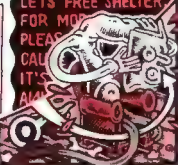
13¢ - OUR DAILY - **THICK BROWN PASTE**

SUPERB HUMAN BODY SPLASH!

ORGANS ARE WELL PROPORTIONNED ON THE AMBER BRICK WALL & IT'S MIXING SO WELL WITH THE SHADES OF YELLOW, RED & BROWN... A GREEN TOUCH OF PUTREFIED MOSS ADD POETRY TO THE BUCOLIC SCENE... (MORE INSIDE)

Join the
**SECRET
SEWER SOCIETY**

TERRORIZE, KILL & RAPE, ABUSE, MENACE & MASSACRE! NATURAL LAW & BULLETS FREE SHELTER FOR MORE PLEASE CALL IT'S ALWAYS



...SO...



WANT TO SEE SOMETHING HEAVY? GO TO
<http://lis.int-ars.fr/le-dernier-cri/>

DON'T WAIST YOUR TIME READING THE STUPID TEXT AND GO DOWN THE PAGE. CLIK ON

"henriette valium"



IT'S THE PROHIBITED BOOK CALLED
"CURÉS MALADES" (SICK PREACHERS)

FIND OUT BY YOURSELF WHY THE FRENCH
EDITOR KICKBACK....

AND... WHAT ABOUT YOU?
BIG VALIUM OPENSLOT!!!

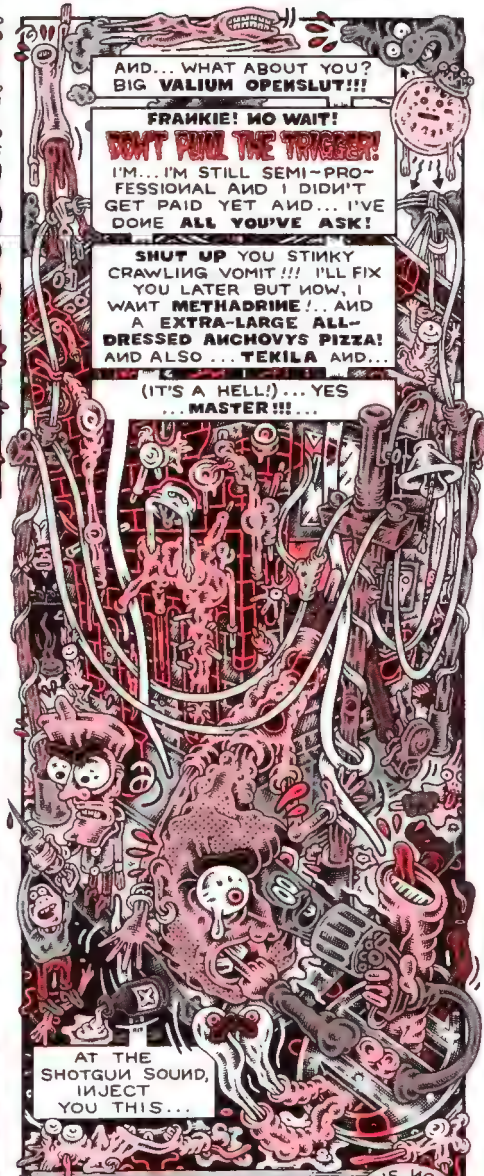
FRANKIE! NO WAIT!

DONT PULL THE TRIGGER!

I'M... I'M STILL SEMI-PROFESSIONAL AND I DIDN'T GET PAID YET AND... I'VE DONE ALL YOU'VE ASK!

SHUT UP YOU STINKY CRAWLING VOMIT!!! I'LL FIX YOU LATER BUT NOW, I WANT METHADRINE!... AND A EXTRA-LARGE ALL-DRESSED ANCHOVYS PIZZA! AND ALSO ... TEKILA AND...

(IT'S A HELL!)... YES
... MASTER!!! ...



AT THE
SHOTGUN SOUND,
INJECT
YOU THIS...

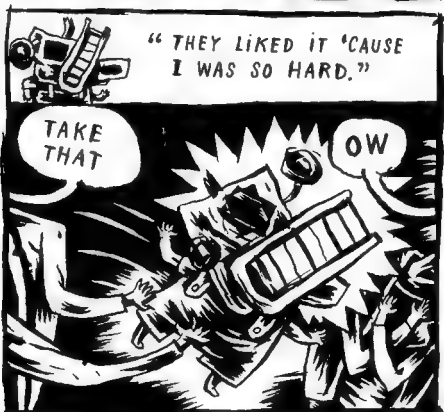
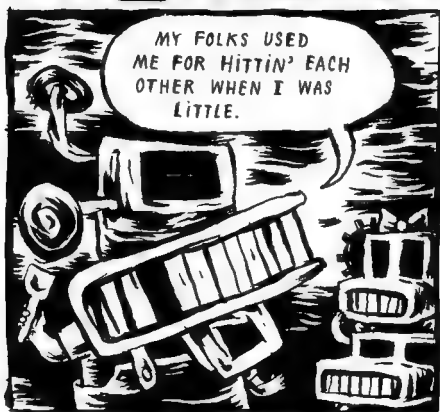
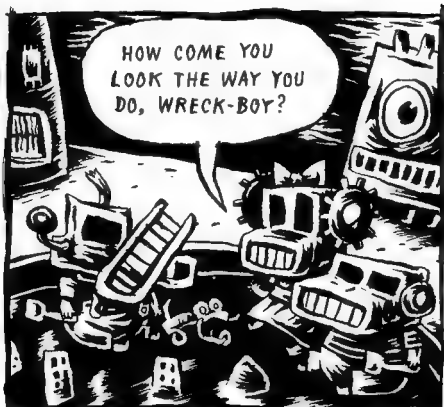
DRAWINGS & SCENARIO

Henriette Valium

IT'S NOT



MY FALSE...



back issues



5

Ordering info

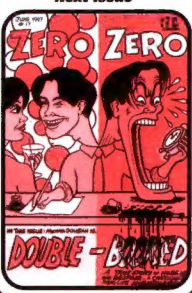
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FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS,
7563 Lake City Way NE,
Seattle, WA 98115.

(All back issues of ZERO ZERO are \$3.95 except for #8, which is \$5.95.) Just add \$3.00 shipping to any size order (except for a subscription, which is \$18.95, \$20.95 outside the U.S., for five issues). Mail your order to the above address — or, if you have a Visa or MasterCard, call it in at 800-657-1100.

Even if you don't have any money, write us and we'll send you a BRAND NEW full-color catalogue of all the things you can't afford to buy!

Next Issue



1 ZEROZERO1

March/April 1987
TED STEARN premieres "Fuzz and Pluck," PAT MOSKOWITZ and CHARLES JURKOWSKI team up, plus MAX ANDERSSON, FRANK STACK, HENRIETTE VALIUM, J.R. WILLIAMS, and a jam by KIM DETCH and MICHAEL DOUSNAU

2 ZEROZERO2

May/June 1987
RICHARD SALA debuts "The Chattering Whatst!" MAX WHITE premieres "Homunculus," "Car-Boy" by MAX ANDERSSON SPAIN'S treatment PLUS DAVID MAZZUCHELLI in James GLENN HEAD, MATS, DAVID COLLIER, WAYNO, and more "Jesus"!

3 ZEROZERO3

July 1987
SKIP WILLIAMSON and WICK ALBERTGOTT debut, FRANK STACK'S "Jesus" ends, plus MAX ANDERSSON's pentonime strip "Lotta" Plus NEWGARDEN, COLLIER, "Whatst!" and "Fuzz and Pluck!"

4 ZEROZERO4

August 1987
"Meet Buz" by KAZ and GEORGEANNA debut, plus COLLIER, a TED STEARN dream story, JEFF JOHNSON, CAROL TYLER, MAX ANDERSSON, a MARK BEYER "Sign of the Apocalypse," plus AL COLUMBIA'S 2-color "I Hate Killing When Killing Won't Cost!"

5 ZEROZERO5

Sept./Oct. 1987
JOE COLEMAN cover! CHRIS WARE frontpiece! JUSTIN GREEN back cover! BOB DETCH, MAX ANDERSSON's "Dance of the Cuddly Critters Factory," Part 2 of "Meet Buz," "Whatst!" COLLIER, and another episode of "Homunculus."

6 ZEROZERO6

Nov./Dec. 1987
KIM DETCH's adventures "The Strange Secret of Nolly O'Dane!" Plus "Fuzz and Pluck," "Chuckling Whatst!" DAVID COLLIER, SKIP WILLIAMSON, PENNY VAN KORN, GLENN HEAD, and a full-color "Sign of the Apocalypse" by RICK ALBERTGOTT.

7 ZEROZERO7

Jan./Feb. 1988 Special Christmas story by MAX ANDERSSON, 8-page "Best-World" by BILL GRIFFITH, "Molly's" middle chapter by DETCH, plus GILBERT HERNANDEZ, ARCHIE PRENTISS, and an "Apocalypse" back cover by DAVE COLLIER.

8 ZEROZERO8

March/April 1988
Big ol' anniversary issue, kicked off with a CHARLES BURNING cover, plus two-color "Ser-Boy" by ARCHIE PRENTISS, "Whatst!" and "Molly O'Brien," AL COLUMBIA, DAVID COLLIER, "Homunculus," TED STEARN, MIKE DIANA, MAX ANDERSSON, VALIUM's centerpiece!

9 ZEROZERO9

May/June 1988
SKIP WILLIAMSON takes a trip down draggy lane! Virgin Z2 forays from SAM HENDERSON, STEPHANE BLANQUET, and the trippy duo of SUSAN CATHERINE "O" OSCAR ZARATE, plus "Whatst!" COLLIER, and a HENRIETTE VALIUM back cover.

10 ZEROZERO10

July 1988
DREW FRIEDMAN cover! Eight pages of HENRIETTE VALIUM's New "Moose" story by SAM HENDERSON! Plus, a SKIP WILLIAMSON back cover, a "Car-Boy" story by MAX ANDERSSON, JEFF JOHNSON, DAVE COLLIER, AL COLUMBIA, DORF, "Homunculus," & "Whatst!"

11 ZEROZERO11

August 1988
DAVE COOPER's epic "Crumples" begins with a big ol' 17-page chapter! Plus STEARN, SALA, KAZ, MAZZUCHELLI, ANDERSSON, COLLIER, and a back cover by Trailer Trash's ROY TOMPKINS!

12 ZEROZERO12

Sept./Oct. 1988
MAX ANDERSSON returns with "Death," his biggest and densest story since *First*! P. REVESS and JOAQUIN PERIN make their Z2 debut! All this plus COLLIER, COOPER, DOUSNAU, and SALA, and a back cover by now-older-than DAN CLOWES!

13 ZEROZERO13

Nov./Dec. 1988
Big, big chapter of "Fuzz and Pluck" Also, SAM HENDERSON's "Secret Comics," SKIP WILLIAMSON's "Succubus Things Turned Ugly," plus "Homunculus," "Whatst!" COLLIER, JIM BLANCHARD back cover, and the return of "Homunculus" by DOUG ALLEN!

14 ZEROZERO14

Jan./Feb. 1989
STEPHANE BLANQUET cover, and the first two-count-ten-two of many "Secret Stories!" MIKE DIANA's Terry Ladden Plot of course, plus "Whatst!" more "Crumples," and a back cover by KIM DETCH!

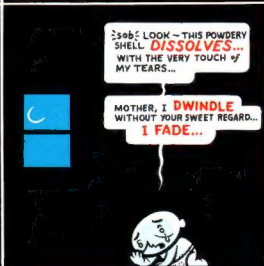
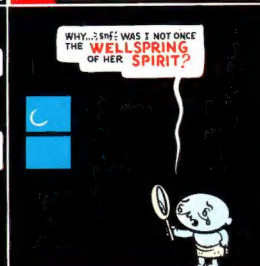
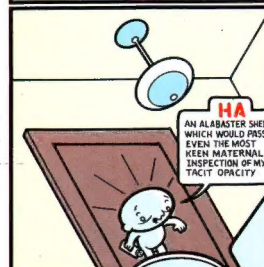
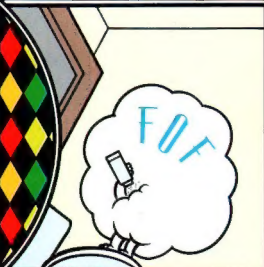
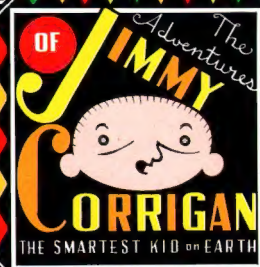
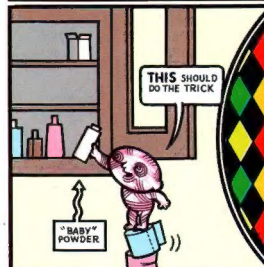
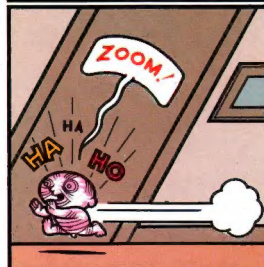
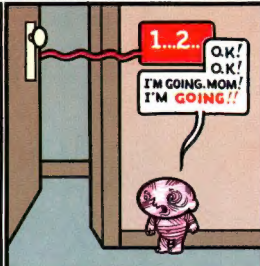
15 ZEROZERO15

March 1989
JOE SACCO goes to Burma with his first major comics story slice. Pensive Plus COLLIER, REVESS, COOPER, VALIUM, SALA, HENDERSON's "Girly Stamp Guy," and a "Sign of the Apocalypse" by COLUMBIA!

APOLOGIA: On the back cover of our previous issue, "Walpurgisnacht" was rendered with an additional — and quite improper — "c." ZERO ZERO regrets this error and sincerely and humbly offers its fullest apologies to AL COLUMBIA and his family, and most importantly, to you, dear reader, for any undue distress that may have resulted. We could only claim some orthographical liberty to cover our obvious stupidity, but, no, my friends, that would be dishonest. Shamed by this most grievous error, MARC ARSENAULT (our art director since issue #8) shall be leaving ZERO ZERO upon completion of this issue. Mr. Arsenault's plans include climbing the Brocken to cultivate his love of solitude and other weak and idle themes...

Marc is also the art director for the brand new Fantagraphics title STEVE DITKO'S STRANGE AVENTING TALES, the first issue of which should be just a few racks away from ZERO ZERO at your local comics emporium. If you think the stories in ZERO ZERO are weird, you ought to check out this latest bizarre masterpiece from the classic SPIDER-MAN and DR. STRANGE artist — you'll love it, we promise!... On the art director front, BRAD ANGELL, late of Fantagraphics' distribution department, will move into the Z2 art-director slot beginning with #17; wish him luck, for most every other Z2 art director has gone crazy and fled after a few issues... RICHARD SALA wants your level! Write him at 2625 Alcatraz Avenue, Box #183, Berkeley, CA

94705 to receive a list of original art for sale and other goodies. By the way, Richard promises that "Chuckling Whatst!" will in fact end two issues from now, but we've heard that before... DAVE COOPER wants your forgiveness! He missed his deadline this issue, but "Crumples" will return next issue!... Special thank-yous to this issue's colorists: JEFF JOHNSON (who colored the Kaze cover), AL COLUMBIA (who finished up "Blood Clot Boy" during a recent sojourn in Seattle), HENRIETTE VALIUM (who nearly went insane doing color indications for his own "The Man From the Sewer"), and RICK ALBERTGOTT (who nearly went insane following Valium's color indications on "The Man From the Sewer")... Auf Wiedersehen for now! —ED.



THE SIXTEENTH SIGN OF THE IMPENDING APOCALYPSE:



BEAUTY IS NO LONGER SKIN DEEP, AS NARCISSISTS WORLDWIDE TAKE BODY MODIFICATION TO ITS ULTIMATE CONCLUSION. DISSATISFIED WITH THE AESTHETICS OF THEIR INTERIOR ORGANS, THEY SET UP CLANDESTINE TRANSPLANT LABORATORIES TO SUPPLEMENT OR CONTRAVENE MOTHER NATURE'S INADEQUATE EFFORTS.

Illustrated by: Krystine Kryttre



